The Place of Interest in Education.

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Outline

1. What is Interest?
   a. Discussion of De Firmo’s definition.
   b. Two kinds of interest:mediate and immediate.

2. Importance of Interest.
   a. “Interest is the greatest word in education,” Schurman.
   b. Interest removes drudgery.

3. Factors which influence interest.
   a. Heredity
   b. Age
   c. Environment
   d. Temperament

4. Herbart’s theory of interest.

5. Interest and attention.

6. Interest and imitation.

7. Interest and memory.

8. Art of securing interest.

9. Conclusion.
References.
1. Interest and Education - De Garmo.
8. The Educational Process - Bagley.
10. Philosophy of Teaching - Thorpe.
13. Ufer's Pedagogy of Herbart - "
15. Early Education - Burns.
Interest is a doctrine associated with many great minds, and has been discussed at length by many of the great educators of the present and the past.

What is interest? This a question which, notwithstanding all this discussion, is yet incapable of exact definition. It is not a form of knowledge; it is not a kind of action; but it is a "feeling to be felt not defined" says De Carnes. It is a feeling familiar to every growing mind, yet we cannot exactly define it.

In his work on "Interest and Education," De Carnes defines interest as an "interest is a feeling which accompanies the ideal of self-expression."
is the name given to the pleasurable or painful feelings which are evoked by an object or idea."

Many other great writers also agree that interest is a feeling, a feeling of the real value of the end in view. If the end seems to us to be of great value, our interest will will be proportionately great. On the other hand, if the end in view seems to be of small value to us, our interest will likewise be small.

De Carmo gives great prominence to the idea of self-expression. By the term "self-expression" we mean that which the self now is and what it hopes to be in true future state of expression. It is upon
This feeling is the desire for self expression that the feeling of interest depends.

Interest and this idea of self expression go hand in hand. The artist in his desire for self expression, i.e. in his desire to express himself as an artist, is interested in everything connected with his vocation. So is it in every profession. The implements of that profession are intensely interesting to those who follow that profession, because it aids him in his desire for self expression.

We have three means of becoming educated. The widest form of education is that which we receive through life, for every experience in life has its influence upon us. The other two forms are oral and written.
instruction. We are indebted to all these forms for our education.

But among the primitive people, life is the primary educational factor. When life is the means of education, interest is assured.

The primitive man is interested in daily labor, because it furnishes him with food to eat and clothes to wear, wherein he to live. So it is with the whole human population. We are interested in that which aids us in self-survival and self-expression, not only in regard to food and clothing, but in that which will put us upon a higher plane in life.

We know that if we are educated, we can be of more use to the world and so our own immediate family and friends, therefore we
are interested in that which will aid us in attaining this higher plane of usefulness.

We have two kinds of interest, the immediate and the mediate.

The first can hardly be called an interest. It is rather an instinct. With the child, play is a universal instinct, although we sometimes hear it called immediate interest. The child plays instinctively; there is no effort, no interest, or rather the child does not know himself to be interested. He only knows that he likes to engage in this kind of activity, and simply plays from impulse.

It is the mediate interest with which education is concerned. Here we find both desire
and effort. Of these however, we will treat later.

On the title page of the Cermak’s work on Interest and Education, we find the following words, “Interest is the greatest word in education.” To those who have not studied the question, this quotation from Prof. Schurman may seem to be too sweeping a statement. We cannot deny, however, that interest is a very important factor in education, for “interest is the life of teaching,” says Currie.

In older times, the students were drawn to study. They learned under compulsion, no efforts being made to get them interested in to make their work and surroundings attract them. Now we try to develop interest, for it is a recognized fact that
It is economy to develop acquired interests, "that the impulses are primitive interests may be replaced with higher needs." It is a saving of time and energy. Without interest, there could be little education.

Memory, will and effort, pride have their place, but without interest, the memory would be too largely called upon, constant attention and great effort would be required, and as a result, little value would be retained. Few people have the grit, energy, or ability to acquire an education under such adverse circumstances.

Interest makes drudgery unnecessary. By drudgery, we mean interest in the end, but not in the means. School work is drudgery to those who
are interested in getting a problem or a certain lesson, but really dislike the work necessary to attain it. If interest removes this drudgery, education will be much easier to acquire, if we can develop interest. It does away with monstrosity, and gives zest and life to undertakings.

Interest then, is a very essential factor in education, and its importance can scarcely be overrated.

Interests depend largely upon various factors, such as, heredity, age, temperament, environment, and others. Heredity plays an important part here. Interests in young children are common, but in later life, individualities crop out. It is these individu-
nunities which show the nearing
of sincerity up our interests. Many
children inherit tendencies
directly from their parents,
some three generations back. In
fact, there are very few who do
not in some form or other, in-
herit some like or dislike from
their forefathers. This inheri-
tance may be a goodness for
animals, or a passion for
mechanics, and such interests,
it is evident, have a direct
influence upon the education
of the individual.

The child's interests are
necessarily different from
those of older people, for
interests follow the development
of the mind. The young child
leaves chiefly through the
diverse, and during this sense
perception stage, they are of
course deeply interested in all things which appeal to the senses. Thus the teacher of small children uses concrete methods, and illustrates with real objects, pictures and models. When the child reaches the imaginative period, his interests are necessarily different, and while the reasoning time of his life covers, his interests are entirely changed.

The environment, perhaps, has less influence than the other factors. It simply modifies the natural interest of the individual. The moral tone of the home life does much for the child either for good or for bad. Those whose surroundings are good influence
will, of course, have more chance to be something in the world than one who lacks these advantages. They will be better fitted to enter civil society.

The temperament of the individual should also be taken into consideration. The interest of all people are not alike, for what will awaken interest in one might call for indifference in another.

Interest may be permanent or temporary. By permanent interest we mean either inherited interests and therefore a part of the original nature, or those acquired early in life, and so become habits. When these permanent interests which show the temperament, the real character of the individual.
Few have done as much for education as that great philosopher and teacher, Herbart, who was the first to elevate pedagogy to a science. His theory of interest revolutionized the whole system of education, and called for widespread admiration and discussion from many great educators. He laid the foundation for education, which the modern Herbartians have developed far beyond its original outline.

In his discussions of interest Herbart gives the following classification:
1. Interest arising from knowledge
2. Interest arising from intercourse with others, as in the family, school, church, society, and the like.
Under the first division, he

treats of empirical, speculative,

and aesthetic interests.

In empirical interests we

find that the principal element

are, contemplation of surroundings,

novelty, and wonder. The latter

element is perhaps the most

important. Plato calls wonder

"the starting point of knowledge.

empirical interest, thence in the

beginning of education. If this

is, so we must begin the edu-
cation of the child by appealing
to these elements. Here we can

dee the great works of the

kindergarten, where the little

ones are taught largely through

the senses, according to the
development of their minds.

We may give reasoning interest"
as another name for speculative interest. It is important for education. The ever ending "whip" of the young child certainly shows a desire for knowledge and this desire should be satisfied whenever possible.

Herbart also speaks of "aesthetic interest," that interest which stirs a love of beauty in nature, art and morals. Such interests should be developed and encouraged.

The second class of interests, i.e. interest arising from intercourse with others, includes sympathetic, social, and religious interest.

Sympathetic interest should begin in the family. The children must be taught to cooperate, and to take an interest
in each other. Such a training will enable the child to cope better with the world, and teaches him to share his sympathy with others.

The social interest is developed all through life. Its foundation is laid in the kindergarten, where the children are taught to consider one another's feelings, and to enjoy the company of other children.

This interest is further developed in later life by the study of literature, civics, commercial geography, etc. Such studies give an insight into the nature and development of the race, and teaches the duties of a good citizen.

Herbart also believed the religious interest to be precious
importance in the development of the individual.

So much for Herbert and his theory. Let us now turn to the question of interest and effort.

We have spoken before of immediate interest, that interest with which education is concerned. In immediate interest we have both desire and effort. By effort we mean the process of trying to realize an end through work. Effort shows desire, a wish to accomplish the object of effort, and this desire develops into interest.

Attention without effort is interest. Attention without interest is effort. The first we may call involuntary attention, the second voluntary.
Tory attention, much that is uninteresting can be learned. So uninteresting or unchanging thing, however, can hold the attention of the mind more than a few seconds at a time. Without interest, therefore, there would be a constant wandering of the mind, and a constant readjustment of the mind to the subject. An education gained under such circumstances would be a tedious, wearisome task. It is the place of interest to do away with this waste of energy and to make it a pleasure to work for an education. The great aim of the teacher, then, should be to promote interest among her pupils. The primary aim, to be sure, i.e. knowledge, but little knowledge can be gained
without interest.

We must first get the pupil interested, before we can gain his attention. The lecturer has the attention of his audience if he can gain their interest. This is why every lecturer begins his lecture with a striking sentence, which gains the interest of the audience at the start.

Although we cannot speak too favorably of interest, we must not forget that effort is also very important. Both interest and effort are often necessary. Indeed, interest often incites effort. The fact that one is interested in a subject does not mean that one puts forth no effort to master
that subject. If often means
that the effort is strengthened
by our interest in the subject.
If such subjects require effort
even when accompanied by interest,
how much more effort would be
necessary without that interest.
It is needless to say that un-
der such circumstances, the nec-
essary effort would not be put
forth, and the subject would
not be mastered. If the pupil
is not interested, even while
seeming to study, his mind will
be enganged with far away thoughts.
There will be a sort of subconsci-
ousness going on which will prevent
him from absorbing that which
he is presumably studying. Such
mechanical activity should be
discouraged.
A child's activity naturally
move along the line of least
resistance. It is not natural
therefore, for him to put forth
much effort in mastering those
subjects which are distasteful
to him. Since this is the case,
the teacher should never cease
to strive to turn the pupil's
interest into the right channels.
A man's success in life is often
determined by his powers of
attention. The cultivation of this
power, that is in the child, is im-
portant, and we must cultivate
this attention through the
power of interest.

Imitation and interest
also are closely associated. It
is instinctive for a child to
imitate that which goes on
around him. We must not
imitate everything, however, be-
imitate only that which he

admire, that which appeals to him. The necessity of good example and good models is evident. Such examples should begin at home, for if good principles and right living are practiced before him, he will naturally imitate these good qualities. These good examples should be carried on in the schoolroom. The child imitates greedily, and his teacher should be one whose example he can follow to advantage.

The child's interest often depends upon the interest of his fellow pupils. They do not stop to consider whether the subject might be interesting to them, but simply follow blindly the likes and dislikes of the other pupils. A change of association will often develop interest in these very subjects before disliked, because it is
absence of those who fought against them.

From the age of six to twelve, imitative games seem to appeal to children of both sexes. Many of them wish to follow the occupations of those around them. The little girl, for instance, likes to play at housekeeping or teaching school. Imitation takes directly upon habit. It is a safe plan therefore, to get the children interested in the best models.

Memory is one of the important factors in education, and interest is a great aid to memory. By the law of association we know that the greater the number of ideas associated together, the more quickly and easily will those ideas be recalled.
in the study learned, there will lesson the difficulty of remembering. If, for instance, an audience listen to a lecture on "birds," there will be many in the audience who will go away and remember very little, while others will retain much. The former are those who probably care little for birds, and have practically no interest in them. The latter class retain more because they are interested in the subject, and have perhaps made original investigation along that line. To such people, everything said by the lecturer will be of interest.

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that interest is a very important factor in education. Since this is
So, it might be well to discuss the art of securing interest.

The personality of the teacher has much influence.
The teacher must set a good example in every way. Charm of manner and skill in presentation are essential.

Interest in school work is not always interest in getting knowledge, but is sometimes caused by the thought of some reward. This is a fatal error and should be discouraged by the teacher. Study for its own sake should be encouraged. The teacher should search out the natural interests of the child.

This requires time, skill and patience, but it can be done, if the teacher perseveres. She should show the pupil how nearly related to his own good these interests are. Many a pupil who
De spurred on to noble effort, and his interest awakened, by his desire for knowledge and future good. An educated man is better fitted for the world than an uneducated one, and this desire for future good will appeal to a child more than such abstract ideas as the sense of duty and honor.

“Interest” says Toulmin, in his “Philosophy of Teaching,” “is the most persuasive idea in the art of teaching,” and we are ready to believe with him, that interest is, indeed, an essential factor in education.